

JABS Press Release 10 July 2006

BBC withdraws allegation that Dr Andrew Wakefield was paid to conduct MMR investigation

Following reports in the Sunday Times on 22 February 2004 the Prime Minister told BBC news: "I hope now that people will see the situation is somewhat different from what they were led to believe...."
(<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/3512195.stm>.) The same report went on to state:

'Dr Wakefield was being paid by Legal Aid to examine whether parents who claim their children were damaged by MMR had a case. Some children were involved in both studies. The Lancet says it was never told of this.'

Now, after more than two years the BBC has accepted that Dr Wakefield was not paid to undertake this investigation. Health safety campaigner, John Stone, pressed the BBC to correct inaccurate statements. He reports: "After extensive private representations the BBC has withdrawn its claim that Andrew Wakefield was paid to investigate whether children had been damaged by MMR vaccine on behalf of litigants."

A BBC report dated 4 March 2004 'MMR researchers issue retraction' stated:

It followed the discovery that Andrew Wakefield was carrying out a second study at the time. He was being paid to see whether there was any evidence to support a possible legal action by a group of parents who claimed their children were damaged by the vaccine.

The text now reads:

Funding was provided to the hospital where his team worked for the study, which was investigating if there was any evidence to support possible legal action by a group of parents who claimed their children were damaged by the vaccine.
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/3530551.stm>

Although the report says it was last updated on 4 March 2004, it was in fact changed this week. At least one other BBC report has been similarly modified.

The payment was one of a number of serious allegations raised against Dr Wakefield. The General Medical Council (GMC) has been investigating whether to charge him or not for the last two years and to date no formal charges have been laid. No parent of any of the children who were under his team's care have made adverse remarks or allegations against Dr Wakefield. The original allegations, Jabs believes, came from a hostile journalist.

Dr Wakefield has insisted he has done nothing wrong and says the science behind his study still stands. He welcomed the GMC investigation. "I not only welcome this, I insist on it," he said. "Serious allegations have been made against me in relation to the provision of clinical care for children with autism and bowel disease, and the subsequent reporting of their disease."

Jabs believes the only serious issue Dr Wakefield is guilty of is listening to the parents, investigating the children and reporting his findings.

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About Jabs:

Jabs is a support group for parents who believe their children have been damaged by vaccines. Jabs neither recommends nor advises against vaccinations but we aim to promote understanding about immunisations and offer basic support to any parent whose child has a health problem after vaccination.

For further background information:

See earlier Jabs Forum topic 'Wakefield was not paid to investigate damage':

http://www.jabs.org.uk/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=207

See also 'Richard Horton and the Wakefield affair':

http://www.jabs.org.uk/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=184

This 2006 JABS press release is archived by [Brian Deer](#) as an evidential document in The Sunday Times investigation of Andrew Wakefield, and claims that [MMR causes autism](#).